

Everyone's a Counselor - TIM'S NOTES:

Biblical Counseling and a Theology of Suffering – Chapter 9

Quotes are from the Bible or the book, A theology of Biblical Counseling by Heath Lambert

Would someone Please say a Prayer to Start Class

In the last Chapter we studied the Theology of sin. Now we turn to suffering caused by sin.

Adams sin corrupted the world in which we live.

“Because of Adam’s sin against God all people now live in a world of profound pain.”

In Counseling we must address counselee’s pain due to their own personal sin; pain due to the sin of those who have wronged them; and the pain of living in a fallen sinful world.

In Previous classes we have had some discussion about why bad things happen. In particular why bad things happen to good people.

In the last two chapters we dealt somewhat with this question. This Chapter and class will delve deeper into this question.

Show the Video

Any Questions/Comments

Six Categories of Suffering

Suffering and Human Sinfulness.

Suffering and the World

Suffering and The Devil

- “Peter 5:8 states, “Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” The Devil is a real enemy for believers and unbelievers alike”

Suffering and the Pain of Others

- “Romans 9:2-3 “I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.”
 - The suffering of others leads to our suffering. I suffer in anguish when my children, my family, my friends, suffer.

Suffering and Confusion

- “Our limited knowledge is separated from the life-giving wisdom of God, so our thinking processes are not only limited but faulty. Sin causes us to feel puzzled about which path is the wise one.”

Our limited thinking ability, to a great extent, is why we have difficulty understanding why bad things happen, and in particular why bad things happen to good people.

Suffering and Death

- “A final category of sin is the physical weakness of our bodies that leads eventually to death.”

We all suffer from sickness, allergies, colds, flu, disease, pandemics, and eventually death all causing suffering.

Trusting God's Character

"Living in a sinful world brings pain. Whether we suffer because of our own sin, the direct sin of others, the sin of the world, the pain of others, the operations of the Devil, our own confusion, or the slow decline of our bodies toward death, we suffer."

"In Previous Chapters we saw the Biblical response to the personal sin of a counselee is Repentance, and the biblical response when a counselee is sinned against by others is Forgiveness."

"In this Chapter we learn the Biblical counseling response to experiencing the sin of Adam in a fallen world is to trust God"

God's Good Character:

Read the bottom of page 255 and page 256.

Talk about Kiley, -

Teenager with Cancer - my Bible study class has been praying for years.

God's Good Character Preserved in First and Second Causes:

Read the top of page 257.

Preserving God's Good Character with His Active and Passive Will

Read the paragraph at the bottom of page 258

The Character of God and the Counseling Task

Read Psalm 23, which is at the top of page 261

We should point Counselees to the Strong and Loving Character of God and Plead with them to Trust Him. We should appeal to them to believe that when bad things happen, we can trust that God loves us and is able to use his power in good ways that may not be understandable to us.

Trusting God's Plan

The Bible encourages us not only to trust in God's character but also in his Plan.

Psalm 119:68 "Lord You are Good and Do Good".

The Lord not only is good, but does good things.

God uses the suffering we experience for our good. One way Suffering benefits us is by bringing about spiritual fruit in our lives.

Romans 5: 3-5 "We rejoice in our suffering, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us".

“The primary benefit of suffering stated in the Bible is that it glorifies God by maximizing our need for him.”

THIS WAS VERY EVIDENT WITH MANY OF THE INMATES. THEY HAD TO REACH A LOW POINT BEFORE THEY WERE WILLING TO CONSIDER NEEDING ANYTHING BECIDE THEMSELVES GIVING CHARLES AND MYSELF AN OPPORTUNITY TO BRING THEM TO CHRIST.

“When people are struggling with pain, we need to be committed to biblical counseling because it is the Bible alone that provides us with words to say that matter.”

Final word: I now will end with the paragraph on page 273